

Excerpt from The Prose Edda; The Death of Balder:

The gods became exceedingly wroth, as might be expected. So he ran away and hid himself in a rock. Here he built a house with four doors, so that he might keep an outlook on all sides. Oftentimes in the daytime he took on him the likeness of a salmon and concealed himself in Frananger Force. Then he thought to himself what stratagems the asas might have recourse to in order to catch him. Now, as he was sitting in his house, he took flax and yarn and worked them into meshes, in the manner that nets have since been made; but a fire was burning before him. Then he saw that the asas were not far distant. Odin had seen from Hlidskjalf where Loki kept himself. Loki immediately sprang up, cast the net on the fire and leaped into the river. When the asas came to the house, he entered first who was wisest of them all, and whose name was Kvaser; and when he saw in the fire the ashes of the net that had been burned, he understood that this must be a contrivance for catching fish, and this he told to the asas. Thereupon they took flax and made themselves a net after the pattern of that which they saw in the ashes and which Loki had made. When the net was made, the asas went to the river and cast it into the force. Thor held one end of the net, and all the other asas laid hold on the other, thus jointly drawing it along the stream. Loki went before it and laid himself down between two stones, so that they drew the net over him, although they perceived that some living thing touched the meshes. They went up to the force again and cast out the net a second time. This time they hung a great weight to it, making it so heavy that nothing could possibly pass under it. Loki swam before the net, but when he saw that he was near the sea he sprang over the top of the net and hastened back to the force. When the asas saw whither he went they proceeded up to the force, dividing themselves into two bands, but Thor waded in the middle of the stream, and so they dragged the net along to the sea. Loki saw that he now had only two chances of escape,---either to risk his life and swim out to sea, or to leap again over the net. He chose the latter, and made a tremendous leap over the top line of the net. Thor grasped after him and caught him, but he slipped in his hand so that Thor did not get a firm hold before he got to the tail, and this is the reason why the salmon has so slim a tail. Now Loki was taken without truce and was brought to a cave.